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Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance: elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Letter dated 30 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation to the parliaments of States members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I would be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 70 (a).

(*Signed*) B. **Churkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 30 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Sixth convocation of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

Statement of 18 March 2016 to the parliaments of States members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation are outraged by the latest attempt to justify Nazism and to glorify Nazi war criminals and their accomplices, an attempt which has been made by the inheritors of the fascist ideology in Latvia and their sponsors, some of whom are in Brussels.

On 16 March 2016, former members of Latvian military Waffen SS groups, who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition, held yet another march in Riga, the capital of Latvia — a European Union State that purports to share the ideals, goals and principles of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, including in the area of combating neo-Nazism in all its forms and manifestations. The participants in these commemorative events included not only former members of the SS, but also their spiritual successors from a group of activists in marginal neo-Nazi and nationalist parties and movements in the Baltic States and, most disturbingly, representatives of parliamentary parties in Latvia.

The organizers showed particular cynicism in holding a march to commemorate the events of 16 March 1944, the day when units of Latvian soldiers, who had previously carried out auxiliary and police duties, including punitive measures and security duties at fascist concentration camps, first fought against Red Army units on the territory of Pskov province.

Attempts to whitewash the crimes of former members of Latvian Waffen SS military units and to allege that they, while fighting on the side of Hitler's Germany, were carrying out a national liberation mission, are blasphemous, contrary to historical fact and indefensible.

The Nuremberg Tribunal, whose rulings are not subject to review, set out a number of fundamental principles of contemporary international law and made it clear that all members of the SS organization, including the Waffen SS, should be condemned.

The deputies of the State Duma are convinced that an action that is so cynical and offensive to the memory of the millions of victims of SS punitive measures was possible only with the acquiescence of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, of which Latvia is a member, and with the tacit support of politicians in Europe and the United States of America who are attempting to use the political legacy of Nazism for their own opportunistic and anti-Russian purposes.

The State Duma calls on the parliaments of the States members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to condemn the actions of the Latvian authorities who are actually supporting former SS members and their

sympathizers; and to work together in defence of the ideals for which millions of members of the anti-Hitler coalition laid down their lives during the Second World War.

In the year of the seventieth anniversary of the Judgment of the Nuremberg Tribunal, this calls serves as an alarm, as a reminder of the lessons of the War and as a deterrent to warmongering.

S. E. **Naryshkin**
Chairman
State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation